



Brownfields Redevelopment Efforts Are Big in the Heart of Dallas



This brownfield became home to a pallet recycling facility that created 35 jobs while retaining 60 others.

Dallas, TX

They do things bigger in Texas...or so they say. Through its brownfields restoration efforts, Dallas is proving this adage to be true. The city has been the recipient of multiple awards under EPA's Brownfields Initiative, including Assessment Demonstration Pilot, Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund Pilot, and Job Training Demonstration Pilot grants. In addition to having leveraged more redevelopment funding from the private and public sectors than any other Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot, Dallas is one of only three cities selected as a Clean Air/Brownfields Pilot in conjunction with EPA, the Economic Development Administration, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

Showcase Communities are selected by the Brownfields National Partnership to demonstrate that through cooperation, federal, state, local, and private efforts can be concentrated around brownfields to restore these sites, stimulate economic development, and revitalize communities. Showcase Communities serve as models for broad-based cooperative efforts to support locally based initiatives. Showcases receive up to \$400,000 from EPA for both environmental assessments and to support the loan of a federal employee to the Showcase for up to three years. Showcase Communities receive additional financial and technical support from the Partnership's more than 20 federal partners, depending on the community need and program eligibility.

The Dallas brownfields program has leveraged more than \$840 million for brownfields cleanup and redevelopment in the city. Additional grants from EPA include \$40,000 to Texas A&M University Engineering Extension Service to conduct an efficiency pilot study of mixed-use, multistory buildings using EPA's EnergyStar model, and \$50,000 for Phase I and II environmental site assessments (ESAs) on the future site of the Dallas Police Headquarters.

In addition to public and private sector funding, Dallas has leveraged community support and awareness of brownfields through its promotion and outreach efforts. When a site targeted for redevelopment lies close to a residential neighborhood, Dallas requires the developer to meet with the community to discuss the project's impact and determine cleanup strategies. The "Dallas Brownfields Forum" includes more than 100 representatives from all parts of the stakeholder community, including business, banking, and private citizens, and continues to meet every six weeks. Dallas also hosted the Brownfields National Conference in December 1999, which reported 2,400 attendees—at that time a record for a Brownfields Conference.

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JUST THE FACTS:

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To further spur brownfields restoration, Dallas created a public-private partnership that offers developers an array of economic tools and incentives. Tax abatement on value added to property is available upon approval of the city council. Dallas also may partially or fully fund any city infrastructure required to make a brownfield operational; eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis. Further, the city uses any taxes collected from brownfields developers within a tax increment financing district to fund public improvements within that district. Taxes assessed to these developers are based on the property's value prior to any site restorations.

Dallas' Showcase Community has also focused its efforts on West Dallas and the city's southern sector, areas known for their disadvantaged communities with high minority populations. One of the Showcase Community's earliest successes was the transformation of a former U.S. Army Corps of Engineers soil testing facility into a homeless shelter. Showcase Community staff worked with the U.S. General Services Administration to designate the site as a brownfield and with the state Department of Health and Human Safety to handle requests from potential purchasers and developers. Once a nonprofit organization showed interest, the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission (TNRCC) performed site assessments that revealed minimal cleanup requirements. The new shelter opened in Fall 2001.

Additional brownfields restoration successes within Dallas include a former pipe manufacturing plant that became a pallet recycling facility, creating 35 jobs while retaining 60 others, and a former municipal landfill that was redeveloped into a 15-acre plaza for restaurant, hotel, and office/warehouse use.

CONTACTS:

For more information on EPA's Showcase Communities, contact Tony Raia of OSWER's Office of Brownfields Cleanup and Redevelopment at (202) 566-2758

Or visit EPA's Brownfields Web site at:

<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>